



UCL

FIND *your* FUTURE

UCL Careers Response to Oil Companies at Careers Events

Written in response to [UCL Student Union Education Zone agenda 1 November](#)

2. Item for discussion: [lobby UCL to prevent oil companies from speaking at UCL Engineering career talks](#)

The idea: ban all oil companies from attending career talks aimed at UCL Engineering students. Or at the very least, educate students on the ethics of Engineering before these companies attend campus. Do you think the union should take this stance? [Answer our poll!](#)

UCL Careers welcomes a broad range of employers to our events who are interested in hiring UCL students and graduates. In our [Employer Engagement Policy](#) we outline who we work with. This includes any graduate employer offering legally compliant opportunities. This stance was approved by UCL senior management. We believe that students should be given freedom of choice in where they decide to work. Therefore, we do not impose a subjective viewpoint on which companies are allowed to attend our events, as long as they are offering genuine, lawful opportunities that would not bring UCL into disrepute. It would be impossible for us to draw the line on which companies to allow to engage with our services.

It is our job as a careers service to be objective and impartial and this is integral to the [code of ethics](#) that we sign up with our professional body AGCAS. It is not our role to tell someone where they should and shouldn't work and we would not wish to alienate students who do wish to work certain industries. It is our role to listen to students, coach, guide and educate and help the students learn about companies and their own ethics and values to make up their own mind.

Ethics is a core part of the Engineering curriculum at UCL and across the globe. For degree programmes to obtain accreditation by the Engineering Council in the UK they must teach and assess ethics and the learning outcomes are outlined in the [Engineering Council's Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes \(AHEP\) document](#). The Faculty of Engineering Sciences' [Integrated Engineering Programme](#) (IEP) is a comprehensive example of how the high standards UK Accreditation learning outcomes are embedded into engineering education at UCL. It is also world-leading and award winning. In the first years of a student's undergraduate education through the IEP, ethics is an essential and core concept taught to all students which is also explored and practised in context through the 'Engineering Challenges' project module and the 'Scenarios' associated with department specific Design and Professional Skills syllabi. Through these modules students consider social impact and ethical considerations of real-world problems. This culminates in the 'How to Change the World' activity where students work in multi-disciplinary teams to look at global challenges centred around the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Additionally, all senior students as part of their final year research and design projects also need to incorporate ethical considerations of their work alongside an analysis of the impact of their engineering solutions.

UCL Careers do agree that educating students about companies is a key part of our role and are currently looking at additional ways we can support students learning about different companies and what is right for them. This includes asking companies questions when they advertise or come onto campus about their commitment to sustainability (and other areas like EDI) so we can “badge” them and make them easily identifiable and visible to students. This is work in progress and we would love some student input to make sure this scheme meets student need.

Specifically to the points raised in the [Item for Discussion](#) on 1 November:

- We are not financed in majority by oil companies. 1 oil company (BP) attended our IT careers fair and our Banking, Finance and Economics Fair in 2022/23 at a cost of £550 + VAT to BP per fair.
- We do not have a neutral stance towards climate change. We work hard to educate students on careers in sustainability through our annual [sustainability sector-themed events](#). Our stance towards organisations we engage with is clearly set out in our [Employer Engagement Policy](#).
- The UCL Careers office on the 3rd floor at 40 Bernard Street is leased by UCL. The MacBook suite on the 4th floor of 40 Bernard Street which we assume you are referring to is a UCL classroom and has nothing to do with UCL Careers. Our office space is allocated by UCL, we do not use our income to pay for offices.